

Friends of Midland 2011 Newsletter

Community Affairs

Over the past year Friends of Midland has been very involved with community activities. Earlier in the season we had the pleasure of having volunteers from the “Day of Caring” in central Pennsylvania aid us in a clean up. The group assigned to us was from Capital Blue Cross and with the help of Lenwood Sloan and Bob Welsh the turnout was great. They set headstones, fixed the front sign area, mowed grass, planted flowers, painted the shed with dry loc, cut bushes and distributed mulch plus many other duties that needed attended to. What a glorious day! The weather was just right and the volunteers were eager. Bob also had “Subway” lunches delivered for all the volunteers. Borough of Steelton donated bottled water.

During this same time period we were blessed with a young man Gabriel Policare who was working towards his Eagle Scout honor. He presented his idea to Swatara Township, who helped to secure the fence post from Home Depot of Harrisburg. He had organized several volunteers from his scout group to assist him with digging holes and setting up the new fence along Cole Alley. He is to be commended along with his father, Greg, who assisted his son in holding up the many fencepost and having their bonding, keepsake moment in life. This was a blessing to have everyone help and work together to get the job done to beautify the cemetery. If you recall another Eagle Scout several years ago had placed fencing on the Kelker Street region of the cemetery. Salute to the scouts.

Throughout the last year I have represented Friends of Midland at meetings for the event that was held at the Pennsylvania Capitol here in Harrisburg. The event was the United Stated Colored Troops (USCT) Civil War Grand Review. The Department of Tourism representative Lenwood Sloan kept the momentum going to make sure that as many African American cemeteries were represented from around the state that held the remains of USCT. Those selected by the organizers to be honored from Midland were Andrew Hill, Lemuel Butler and Charles Henderson of the USCT. Different leaders came together to assure that everyone had a say and could bring suggestions, knowledge and experience to the table. Some of the events leading up to the finale were museum exhibits at the old Dauphin Deposit Bank on Market Street in Harrisburg, special educational sessions at various locations in town, large amounts of advertising around Pennsylvania and many other parts of the country. You may have seen the large billboard type advertisement in your area. Every magazine that had anything to do with history supported this. The large parade of USCT reenactors from around the country came together to celebrate the lives of these men, much like the time of original parade in 1865. Some of them had ancestors who were in the Civil War and others truly love the history. In addition bands played, civilians marched, Mayors and other political persons gave words of hope as they made their way around town to different stops. The parade came to rest at its last stop...the Pennsylvania Capitol with Governor Rendell speaking to the troops, songs were done and the doves were released. What a sight.

Displays were set up in the Keystone Building where everyone could stop in to get one on one history stories. Lots of vendors, information stands and historians of all sorts were available to teach from the youngest to the oldest.

On the every last day at the Hilton there was a special legacy tribute to Dr. Maya Angelou. Dr. Angelou could not attend however on stage there was the great ladies Sonia Sanchez, Bev Smith, Gladys Edmunds and B. Smith. Awards were presented to Esther Bush of Pittsburgh, Joan Myers Brown of Philadelphia and **our own Lt. Colonel (Ret,) Marion Crosson of Steelton.** Congrats ladies.

As we prepare for the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, Friends of Midland will continue to be involved to help keep the history alive. We will as in the past restore, preserve and use Midland as a source of educating the public on the vast history that lies within its boundaries.

Opening Day SUPPORT needed

Midland will be officially open for cleaning starting on April 30th, 8am to 1pm. After Memorial weekend will we only be working every other weekend. Please contact us for the schedule.

We ask for your continued support to this great cause. Like everything in this economic crisis, we too are feeling the crunch. We need gas and oil for the mowers to keep them moving. Other expenditures such as electricity for the shed and flag lighting are ongoing. We have changed our schedule over the last couple of years to help with defraying cost as membership has declined due to various reasons. Midland cannot function without you.

Ways you can help is to volunteer and give good condition lawnmowers, weed whackers and other equipment for the cemetery.

We need a person to trim trees and also cut a large tree down that is dying at the root.

MEMORIAL EVENT

Last but not least our **Memorial service will be held on May 28th, 2011 at 1pm** at the cemetery. Our keynote speaker will be Mr. Earl Merritt of Penn State, State College. Mr. Merritt has a vast knowledge of history that will be shared with the public. Our services has always been about educating the public about the buried history in Midland and cemeteries around the world. Others slated to attend will be Senator Piccola, Professor Johnston of Dickinson College, the United States Colored Troops reenactors of Philadelphia and the Mason. Please come out to hear, see and feel the history...in the making.

Please see the enclosed ad and membership forms.